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# W O R D

TO A

## S M U G G L E R.

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*This TRACT is not to be sold, but given away.*

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I. "WHAT is *Smuggling*?" It is the importing, selling, or buying of run goods: that is, those which have not paid the duty appointed by law to be paid to the King.

1. *Importing run goods.* All *smuggling vessels* do this with an high hand. It is the chief, if not the whole business of these, to bring goods which have not paid duty.

2. Next to these are all *Sea-Captains, Officers, Sailors, or Passengers*, who import any thing without paying the duty which the law requires.

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3. A third sort of Smugglers are all those, who *sell* any thing which has not paid the duty.

4. A fourth sort, those who *buy* Tea, Liquors, Linen, Handkerchiefs, or any thing else which has not paid duty.

II. " But why should they not? *What harm is there in it?*"

1. I answer, *Open Smuggling* (such as was common a few years ago, on the southern coasts especially) is robbing on the highway: and as much harm as there is in this, just so much there is in smuggling. A smuggler of this kind is no *honest*er than an highwayman. They may shake hands together.

2. Private Smuggling is just the same with picking of pockets. There is full as much harm in this as in that. A smuggler of this kind is no *honest*er than a pickpocket. These may shake hands together.

3. But open Smugglers are *worse* than common highwaymen, and private smugglers, are *worse* than common pickpockets. For it is undoubtedly worse to rob *our father*, than one we have no obligation to. And it is worse still, far worse, to rob a good father, one who sincerely loves us, and is at that very time doing all he can, to provide for us, and to make us happy. Now this is exactly the present case. King GEORGE is the father of all his subjects: and not only so, but he is a good father. He shews his love to them on all occasions: and is continually doing all that is in his power, to make his subjects happy.

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4. An honest man therefore would be ashamed to ask, Where is the harm in robbing such a father? His own reason, if he had any at all, would give him a speedy answer. But *you* are a Christian: are you not? You say, you believe the Bible. Then I say to *you*, in the name of God and in the name of Christ, *Thou shalt not steal*. Thou shalt not take what is not thine own, what is the right of another man. But the duties appointed by law are the King's right, as much as your coat is *your* right. He has as good a right to them, as *you* have to this: These are his property, as much as this is yours. Therefore you are as much a thief if you take his duties, as a man is that takes your coat.

5. If you believe the Bible, I say to *you*, as our Saviour said to them of old time, *Render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and unto God the things that are God's*. If then *you* mind our Saviour's words, be as careful to honour the King, as to fear God. Be as exact in giving the King, what is due to the King, as in giving God what is due to God. Upon no account whatever rob or defraud him of the least thing which is his lawful property.

6. If you believe the Bible, I say to *you*, as St. Paul said to the ancient Christians, *Render unto all their dues: in particular, custom to whom custom is due, tribute to whom tribute*. Now custom is by the laws of England due to the King. Therefore every one in England is bound to pay it him. So that robbing the King herein, is abundantly worse than common stealing, or common robbing on the highway.

7. And so it is, on another account also: for it is a general robbery: it is, in effect, not only robbing the King, but robbing every honest man in the nation. For the more the King's duties are diminished,

minished, the more the taxes must be increased. And these lie upon us all: they are the burden not of some, but of all the people of *England*. Therefore every smuggler is a *thief-general*, who picks the pockets both of the King, and all his fellow-subjects. He wrongs them all; and above all, the honest traders: many of whom he deprives of their maintenance: constraining them either not to sell their goods at all, or to sell them to no profit. Some of them are tempted hereby, finding they cannot get bread for their families, to turn thieves too. And then *you* are accountable for *their* sin as well as your own: you bring their blood upon your own head. Calmly consider this, and you will never more ask, "What harm there is in smuggling?"

III. 1. But for all this, cannot men find *excuses* for it? Yes, abundance; such as they are. "I would not do this, says one; I would not sell uncustomed goods: but I am under a necessity: I can't live without it." I answer, May not the man who stops you on the highway, say the very same? "I would not take your purse; but I am under a necessity: I can't live without it." Suppose the case to be your own; and will you accept of this excuse? Would not you tell him, "Nay, let the worst come to the worst, you had better be honest, though you should starve." But that need not be neither. Others who had no more than you to begin with, yet find a way to live honestly. And certainly so may you: however, settle it in your heart, "Live or die, I will be an honest man."

2. "Nay, says another, we do not wrong the King: for he loses nothing by us. Yea, on the contrary, the King is rather a gainer, namely, by the seizures that are made."

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So you plunder the King, out of stark love and kindness! You rob him, to make him rich! It is true, you take away his purse: but you put an heavier in its place! Are you serious? Do you mean what you say? Look me in the face and tell me so. You cannot. You know in your own conscience, that what comes to the King, out of all the seizures made the year round, does not amount to the tenth, no, not the hundredth part of what he is defrauded of.

But if he really gained more than he lost, that would not excuse *you*. You are not to commit robbery, though the person robbed were afterwards to gain by it. You are not to *do evil, that good may come*. If you do, your *damnation is just*.

"But certainly, say some, the King is a gainer by it, or he might easily suppress it." Will you tell him, which way? By Custom-house Officers? But many of them have no desire to suppress it. They find their account in its continuance: they come in for a share of the plunder. But what if they had a desire to suppress it? They have not the power. Some of them have lately made the experiment: and what was the consequence? Why they lost a great part of their bread, and were in danger of losing their lives.

Can the King suppress smuggling, by parties of soldiers? That he cannot do. For all the soldiers he has, are not enough, to watch every port and every creek in *Great-Britain*. Besides, the soldiers that are employed, will do little more than the Custom-house Officers. For there are ways and means of taking off *their* edge too, and making them as quiet as lambs.

But



"But many courtiers and great men, who know the King's mind, not only connive at smuggling, but practise it." And what can we infer from this? Only, that those great men are great villains. They are great highwaymen and pick-pockets: and their greatness does not excuse, but makes their crime tenfold more inexcusable.

But besides. Suppose the King were willing to be cheated, how would this excuse your cheating his subjects? All your fellow-subjects, every honest man, and in particular, every honest trader? How would it excuse your making it impossible for him to live, unless he will turn knave as well as yourself?

3. "Well, but I am not convinced it is a sin: my conscience does not condemn me for it." No! Are you not convinced, that robbery is a sin? Then I am sorry for you. And does not your conscience condemn you for stealing? Then your conscience is asleep. I pray God to smite you to the heart, and awaken it this day!

4. "Nay, but my soul is quite happy in the love of God: therefore I cannot think it is wrong." I answer, Wrong it must be, if the Bible is right. Therefore either that love is a mere delusion, a fire of your own kindling; or God may have hitherto winked at the times of ignorance. But now you have the means of knowing better. Now light is offered to you. And if you shut your eyes against the light, the love of God cannot possibly continue.

5. "But I only buy a little brandy or tea now and then, just for my own use." That is, I only *steal a little*. God says, *steal not at all*.

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6. "Nay, I do not buy any at all myself: I only send my child or servant for it." You receive it of them: do you not? And the receiver is as bad as the thief.

7. "Why I would not meddle with it, but I am forced, by my parent, husband, or master." If you are forced by your father or mother to rob, you will be hanged nevertheless. This may lessen, but does not take away the fault: for you ought to suffer rather than sin.

8. "But I do not know, that it was run." No! Did not he that sold it, tell you it was? If he sold it under the common price, he did. The naming the price, was telling you, "This is run."

9. "But I don't know where to get tea which is not run." I will tell you where to get it. You may have it from those whose tea is duly entered, and who make a conscience of it. But were it otherwise, if I could get no wine, but what I knew to be stolen, I would drink water: yea, though not only my health, but my life depended upon it: for it is better to die, than to live by thieving.

10. "But if I could get what has paid duty, I am not able to pay the price of it. And I can't live without it." I answer, 1. You can live without it, as well as your grandmother did. But 2. If you could not live without it, you ought to die, rather than steal. For death is a less evil than sin.

11. "But my husband will buy it, whether I do or no. And I must use what he provides, or have none." Undoubtedly to have none is a less evil, than to be a partaker with a thief.

IV. Upon the whole then, I exhort all of you that fear God, and desire to save your souls, without regarding what others do, resolve at all hazards to keep yourselves pure. Let your eye be fixed on the word of God, not the examples of men. Our Lord says to every one of you, *What is that to thee? Follow thou me!* Let no convenience, no gain, no pleasure, no friend, draw you from following him. In spite of all the persuasions, all the reasonings of men, keep to the word of God. If all on the right hand and the left will be knaves, be you an honest man. Probably God will repay you (he certainly will, if this be best for you) even with temporal blessings: there have not been wanting remarkable instances of this. But if not, he will repay you with what is far better: with the *testimony of a good conscience toward God; with joy in the Holy Ghost; with an hope full of immortality; with the love of God shed abroad in your hearts. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!*

F I N I S.